

UCLA SYMPHONY FAQs

Q: How do I sign up for an audition?

A: Go to www.music.ucla.edu/orchestra and scroll down to the auditions section of the page. There you will find PDFs, listed by instrument, which contain a listing of the audition requirements, and copies of the required orchestral excerpts. In early September, a link will be added to the page which will allow you to sign up for an audition time.

Q. What are the auditions like?

A. When you sign up to audition, you may designate whether you are auditioning for either orchestra or for both. The auditions are generally around 10 minutes in length; you will be playing for me and sometimes for my student conductors and selected faculty. I will ask you to play your solo piece and some of the required orchestral excerpts. Sightreading may be requested.

Q: Can non-music majors audition for Philharmonia?

A: Philharmonia is a pre-professional training orchestra, requiring a major time commitment during and outside of rehearsals. Advanced non-major string players are welcome to audition for Philharmonia, but they must be prepared to make this kind of commitment. While woodwind, brass, percussion, keyboard and harp players may also audition for Philharmonia, these positions are almost always occupied by music majors.

Q: How competitive are the auditions for Symphony?

A: There are generally many more applicants than spaces, so auditions are quite competitive.

Q. How good is UCLA Symphony? How large is the orchestra?

A. UCLA Symphony is an outstanding and well-disciplined campus orchestra, capable of playing major orchestral works like Rimsky-Korsakov "Scheherazade," Shostakovich Symphony No. 5, Beethoven Symphony No. 6 ("Pastorale"), Dvorak Symphony No. 9 ("From the New World") and Stravinsky "Firebird" Suite. It consists of approximately 85 members.

Q. Who conducts UCLA Symphony?

A. Symphony is conducted by our Masters and doctoral student conductors. In the fall and spring, it is conducted by my students under my supervision. In winter quarter, it is conducted by our choral conducting graduate students under the supervision of their instructor, Professor Donald Neuen.

Q: Do any music majors play in Symphony? Is preference given to music majors in auditions?

A: With very few exceptions, all string players in Symphony are non-majors. Woodwind and brass sections are generally around 75% music majors. Auditions are completely open; there are no spots "reserved" for music majors. If two players are tied in terms of audition results, however, preference will generally be given to the music major.

Q. Is there a rotation system between orchestras? How does seating work?

A. Woodwind and brass players chosen for each orchestra in fall auditions tend to remain in that orchestra for the entire year, though some movement between orchestras can occur. Woodwind and brass seating for both orchestras is generally rotated within concerts; string sections rotate between concerts. There is no seniority system in selecting players or assigning parts for either orchestra.

Q: Can I join Philharmonia or Symphony quarter by quarter or is the commitment for the entire year?

A: The expectation is that you will stay in the orchestra for the entire year. With non-majors, however, class schedules, labs and other commitments sometime make it impossible for players to remain in the orchestra for all three quarters.

Q: What is the attendance requirement for Philharmonia and Symphony?

A: There are strict attendance and tardiness policies for both orchestras which are outlined in the course syllabi and handbooks you receive at the beginning of each year.

Q: Can I be in UCLA Symphony without enrolling in the course?

A: Yes. If you are enrolling in Symphony as a class, however, you will enroll separately for each quarter.